

Bahrain stands tall in British ring

Limbu defeats British fighter at UK charity boxing event

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TDT | Manama

Bahrain's Royal Guard boxer Prakash Limbu secured a split-decision victory over British Army fighter Dylan Swales at the Special Air Service (SAS) Charity Boxing event held in Hereford, United Kingdom.

The 65kg bout, staged last Friday, continued Bahrain's strong presence at one of the most respected events on the British military boxing calendar. This year's edition supported the Clocktower Foundation, a charity dedicated to improving the welfare and morale of members of the British Armed Forces.

Representing the Royal Guard Special Forces (RGSF), Limbu overcame the hometown favourite in front of a distinguished audience, adding another notable success for Bahrain's contingent at the competition. His victory follows Hamza Zriire's win in last year's edition, further extending the Royal Guard's successful run at the event.

Speaking to The Daily Tribune, Limbu expressed pride in the achievement.

"It was a tough fight and a real test, but I felt strong throughout," he said.

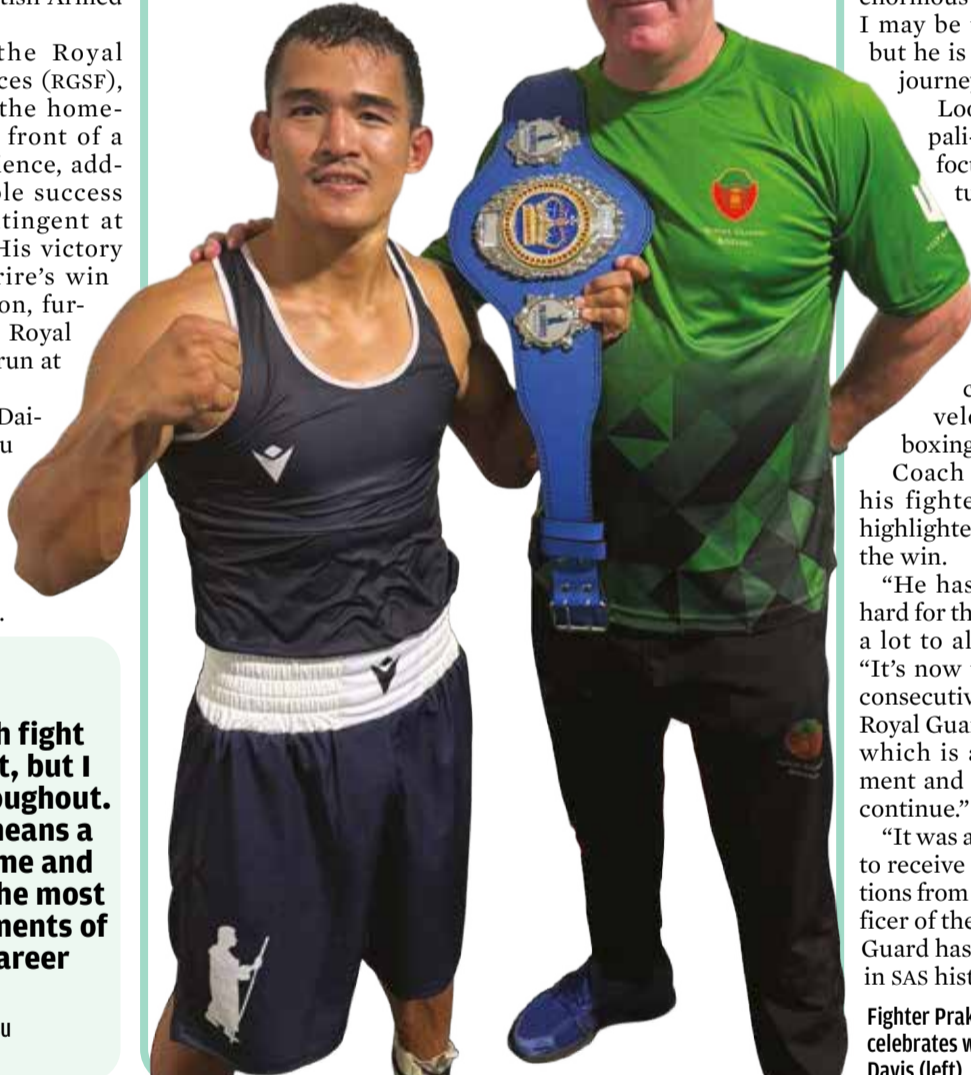
“It was a tough fight and a real test, but I felt strong throughout. This victory means a great deal to me and ranks among the most important moments of my boxing career.”

PRAKASH LIMBU

Exclusive



Former professional boxer Scott Welch (left), Limbu, and coach Davis with the Pilgrims title belt



"This victory means a great deal to me and ranks among the most important moments of my boxing career."

"Competing in my opponent's hometown brought its own pressure, but I stayed focused and pushed hard from start to finish. Winning this fight was extremely important to me."

Limbu also paid tribute to coach Tony Davis, with whom he has worked closely in preparation for the bout.

"We've been working one-on-one for the past three months," he said. "This time I made a point of fully trusting Tony's instructions and putting in the work required. He deserves enormous credit for this result. I may be the one in the ring, but he is the one steering the journey."

Looking ahead, the Nepali-born boxer said he is focused on future opportunities in the sport.

"Tony and I are excited about the next chapter, including exploring opportunities in professional boxing while continuing to help develop the Royal Guard boxing team," Limbu said.

Coach Tony Davis praised his fighter's dedication and highlighted the significance of the win.

"He has worked incredibly hard for this result and it means a lot to all of us," Davis said. "It's now two victories in two consecutive years for Bahrain's Royal Guard team at this event, which is a fantastic achievement and one we are proud to continue."

"It was also a special moment to receive personal congratulations from the Commanding Officer of the SAS. Bahrain's Royal Guard has fully cemented itself in SAS history."

Fighter Prakash Limbu (right) celebrates with English coach Tony Davis (left)

Teenager Antonelli claims Monaco pole for Mercedes after 'magic lap'



Teenager Antonelli claims Monaco pole for Mercedes after 'magic lap'

AFP

Kimi Antonelli produced a "magic lap" to edge Max Verstappen in the dying seconds of Saturday's qualifying and claim pole for the Monaco Grand Prix.

The 19-year-old Italian clocked one minute and 12.051 seconds in his Ferrari for his fourth pole this year, extending Mercedes run to six out of six, and putting him in position to become the first Italian since Alberto Ascari of Ferrari in 1952 to win five consecutive F1 Grands Prix.

"It was one of those laps that we call a magic lap," said a beaming Antonelli, after hugging his father, Marco.

"I was able to put it all together and it was such a close qualifying with Max."

"I think the first run off in Q3, there was just one millisecond between us. I knew the last lap was good, I was just hoping that it would be enough! But it was very close."

Antonelli's sensational lap came at the end of a sequence of dramatic laps in the final seconds of a classic session as, in turn, Ferrari's Charles Leclerc, Verstappen and then the precocious Italian clocked pole laps.

"I am very happy with that and massive thanks to the team because yesterday we struggled a little bit and today we were able to improve massive-

ly," said Antonelli, who last year finished 18th, three laps down on a triumphant Lando Norris of McLaren.

"I think this is one of the most intensive, if not the most intense qualifying of the year and it takes a massive effort – and also the practices because you just keep trying to get close to the limit."

"When it is about finding the last two tenths, it is not easy because the walls start to come closer and it is not easy to gain the confidence, but I felt great this morning and I am happy that we could finish the job today."

He said despite mounting media attention and speculation, he had not felt any increased pressure.

"For sure, I am just enjoying the driving, enjoying the car, enjoying the weekend," he said, with a customary grin.

"That was a big step compared to last year, it is really nice to be able to enjoy the sessions and now I am looking forward to tomorrow."

Seven-time champion Lewis Hamilton was third for Ferrari. "Congrats to Kimi," said Hamilton, who had recommended the Italian as his successor before he left Mercedes for Ferrari last year.

"A mega, mega job."

"Having your first pole here is so special. We've got such a great crowd here, it's such a beautiful day."

Najma begin Asian campaign in Kuwait

TDT | Manama

The 28th Asian Men's Club League Handball Championship began in Kuwait yesterday, with Bahrain's Al Najma set to open their campaign today under the competition's revised format.

Al Najma arrive at the continental tournament aiming to make a strong start after a mixed domestic season, where they topped the regular-season standings but missed out on the league final and failed to complete a title defence.

They begin their campaign this evening against hosts Kuwait Sports Club at 6pm Bahrain time. The match marks their first step in a bid to secure a third Asian club title and qualification for the 2026 IHF Men's Club



Al Najma's squad during a pre-tournament training session

World Championship in Egypt.

This year's competition features a reduced field of seven teams following the withdrawal of China's CHA, and has shifted to a single round-robin preliminary stage. All teams compete in one standings table, with the top four advancing to the semi-fi-

nals.

Al Najma have strengthened their squad ahead of the tournament, including the loan signing of Bahrain international Jassim Khamis from Al Shabab. He is expected to add experience and control during a demanding schedule.

Further additions include Al Dair goalkeeper Hesham Isa and several overseas players, among them Uros Mitrovic of Serbia, Radojica Cepic of Montenegro, and Daniel Neves of Portugal.

The club is also under new leadership, with Abdulrahman Mohamed taking over

MATCH	OPPONENT	DATE	TIME (BAHRAIN)
1	OPENING MATCH	KUWAIT SC	6 JUNE 6 PM
2	2ND MATCH	AL DUHAIL (QATAR)	7 JUNE 4 PM
3	3RD MATCH	SHARJAH (UAE)	8 JUNE 8 PM
4	4TH MATCH	AL ARABI (QATAR)	11 JUNE 4 PM
5	5TH MATCH	BURGAN (KUWAIT)	12 JUNE 4 PM
6	6TH MATCH	AL KHALEEJ (SAUDI ARABIA)	14 JUNE 8 PM

VENUE: SHEIKH SAAD AL ABDULLAH AL SALIM AL SABAH HALLS
ALL TIMES ARE IN BAHRAIN TIME

as head coach from Ali Al Falahi.

Al Najma remain one of Asia's most successful clubs, having won the continental title in 2017 and 2023, finished runners-up in 2015 and 2022, and placed third in 2001.

After their opening match against Kuwait SC, they will face Qatar's Al Duhail on Monday at 4pm, followed by Sharjah of

the UAE on Wednesday at 8pm. They then meet Al Arabi of Qatar on June 11 at 4pm, Burgan of Kuwait on June 12 at 4pm, and conclude the preliminary round against Saudi Arabia's Khaleej Club on June 14 at 8pm. All matches are in Bahrain time and will be played at the Sheikh Saad Al Abdullah Al Salim Al Sabah Covered Halls Complex in Kuwait.